



Table of Contents

For the second issue in the 35th Volume of the Omen on October the 7th in the Year of our Lord 2010

HATE

A Response to "Smack-O-Lantern"	4
Re: Re: Smack-O-Lantern	5
The Climax Sucks More Than Ever	6

SPEAK

Time to cash in some civil rights	8
Miscellaneous Doodles	9
lol mod 70	10
Stephen has a stretchy dinosaur	11
Google results for arbitrary phrases	14

LIES

Well-written article	15
Charcuterie: A Love Letter	15

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Ian McEwen	<i>The poopsmith</i>



To Submit:

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu or Ian McEwen, Box 286.

"You're probably wasting my pen ink" -Evan

"I know I am" -Ben

"You're charming." -Evan

Front Cover: Ben Batchelder

Back Cover: Ian McEwen

Layout: Rachel Ithen

Assorted otherwise-uncredited art:
Ben Batchelder

EDITORIAL

I am a noob.

by Rachel Ithen

So here it is, October already, and the second issue of the Omen has kind of fallen into my hands. When I was told that I would be doing the majority of layout I must admit I was a little nervous, mostly because, as the title reads, I'm pretty much a noob. I'm a noob when it comes to Macs, InDesign, and pretty much everything that has to do with doing layout for the Omen. But fear not! I've had wonderful helpers teaching me useful shortcuts and making me thankfully less of a noob.

The nervousness returned when I announced "oh, we need to have someone write the editorial, too."

"That would be you" Evan replied.

"Ack" is pretty much how I reacted to that.

I have no idea if what I write and submit and have published in the Omen is at all any good. I've had a few friends tell me they liked reading whatever it was that I randomly put together, but who knows if people are actually entertained by my stuff?

If you know me at all you know that I'm pretty neurotic. I have to text my mom to get her input on pretty much anything I do. And this is the kind of stuff I worry about. I have a friend, Charles, who told me today "you're

so paranoid that I often just want to say to you 'it's okay, Rachel. Everything's okay.'" Although I appreciate that, hearing that my worries are so obviously expressed makes me kind of sad. But I guess worrying about worrying defeats the purpose, so.

Enough about me! That long introduction was to simply say, PLEASE LIKE THIS EDITORIAL AND THIS ISSUE AND THE OMEN AND GAH. :(

But seriously, the Omen rocks. And the Omen loves you. And the Omen will rock even more if you submit things to it. Really, anything. Articles, notes from class, sketches, photographs, conversation logs, comics, knock-knock jokes, poetry, your soul...

...although we may have trouble fitting that on the scanner.

And if you want to be less of a noob, or think you're already less of a noob than me and want to show off, come to layout on alternating Thursdays at 8 PM in the Merrill basement.

The Omen loves you! And I love you. PLEASE LOVE ME. 

Policy

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited,

and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Friday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Fridays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.

The Omen Haiku

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

SECTION HATE

A Response to “Smack-O-Lantern” by Joshua Elias Landes

In response to Ben Batchelder’s article “Smack-O-Lantern”-

Hello! Hi! My name is Joshua Landes. Damn glad to meet you! I’m an officer of the Shadowy Council on Community Activities (SCOCA)- the secretary, in fact (making me the SoSCOCA, pronounced “sauce-coke-ah”). You directed your letter to “Those In Charge Of Spending Hampshire’s Money”! In the context of Hampshire Halloween, “Those” can be reduced, albeit somewhat crudely and simplistically, to the robot overlords who constitute COCA. Having read your article, I thought I would take the time to respond. In particular, the statement with which you conclude your thoughts stood out to me as being remark-

ably misleading and a little depressing. You distinguish the guiltless, innocent masses of Hampshire students, whose involvement in the process of spending you characterize as “inherently out of their hands”. Now, if devotees to the Omen remember my own vitriolic assaults on the integrity of COCA and the various financial oversight commit-

tees that run our fair ship Hampshire last year, I am no stranger to evoking populist rage against the “the system”, “the man”, “my dad”, etc. It’s important to have a campus that is aware, concerned, and vocal in how we present our community and

where our money is spent. THAT IS GOOD. LET’S KEEP DOING THAT, EVERYONE. But this sort of guilt-absolving, finger-pointing, “it’s not our fault, despite consciously refusing to become involved in student



leadership even though the ease with which one CAN become a pronounced influence on financial policy is frankly alarming (i mean now I'm the secretary of a council i'm pretty sure i once compared to the khmer rouge)" is nothing less than lazy. COCA meetings are from 7 to 9 PM in the Council office behind the airport lounge on TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS. SEVEN 2 NINE. TUES, THURS. EVERY WEEK. THE DOOR IS OPEN (well it's not but if you knock we open it, i promise). After I made a fuss and a stink and ranted and raved, I started going to meetings, getting involved, turning my anger to the task of identifying systemic errors and working to fix them. I stand behind the work I've done with COCA, and when we get to vote in five new members within a span of a week, as with this past week, I am proud to know that my fellow students at Hampshire College are also interested in using their voices for more than uninformed pot shots. You suggest in your editorial that the tired, huddled student populace must "make the most of whatever this administration decides to throw at you this year". That's a pitiful expectation for your peers, Ben. The administration doesn't plan Halloween. We do. Here's my suggestion: No one "make the most" of how we run our college. How about we take our ideas, hopes, dreams, wishes, concerns, tuna melts, fries, and coleslaw and turn them into a campus that gives more than fleeting interest in what happens with the Student Activity Fee that we all contribute to? (I haven't had lunch yet. It occurs to me I haven't gone to Friendly's in two years or so, too. I always liked their lil' red baskets the food came in.) Anyways, I don't want to interrupt the Omen's space commitments to firefly fan fic and articles about the Omen any longer than my silly little missive already has, so I'll end with suggesting that bemoaning limitations you've placed on your own capabilities is the definition of complacency. Email all hate to JEL08@hampshire.edu. My office hours for COCA are from 4 to 5 PM in the office every Friday (located beyond the mountains of madness, deep within the bowels of a hell your petty human mind could never comprehend). And remember- Vote For Cthulhu and floss daily.

Rust In Peace,

Joshua Elias Landes, Phd., MDC, esq.



Re: Re: Smack-O-Lantern.

by Ben Batchelder

To Joshua:

I don't want to join COCA, I want to tell them what to do. How is submitting my opinions via the Omen -- where members of COCA can read and be influenced by them -- any less valid than attending the meetings myself? Like you, I feel empowered to affect Hampshire's inner machinations. My way is simply less direct.

Sincerely,
Ben



The Climax Sucks More Than Ever

by Evan Silberman

The Omen's unofficial institutional predilection for smearing whatever newspaper is currently active on campus is frequently nothing more than a mean-spirited joke. I mean, come on, they're newspaper dorks, why not make fun of them? But this semester things have really gone off the rails over at Climax HQ. Their first issue came out today, and I was stunned by how bad it was, even by their usually incredibly low standards. I don't have an issue here with me in the luxuriously appointed and vaguely subterranean Omen office, but I can remember a few lowlights from my brief and reluctant skimming of Fall 2010's first number earlier this afternoon.

First, and most obviously, the Climax seems to no longer be using the Climax's official typeface, known as Climax and designed by former Hampshire student and purported jerkbag David Jonathan Ross. It was a tolerably nice looking newspaper typeface, reasonably attractive and had its own character, the sort of thing one wants in one's newsprint. The Climax I skimmed disdainfully today had no such distinctive typography. Instead, it was layed out in some nameless, faceless, undistinguished, barely readable, completely unsuitable sans serif. What is this crap, Climax? You at least used to have the mild advantage of looking somewhat professionally designed, when the Omen was frequently thrown together in an ad hoc fashion by disaffected non-designers like myself. The current design just looks like someone turned off PDF font embedding when they sent the issue to the printer. Don't know if that's more excusable, or less.

Typography aside, the Climax's layout this week left a lot to be desired. Photos were strewn about at random in some vague attempt at having an "arty" section. Some concrete poetry abortion that resembled line noise from a fax machine was plopped on the back page. Generating filler isn't that hard, guys. In fact, you don't even need filler half the time—gaping holes full of white space are per-

fectly acceptable. We're not professionals. There was also an interview that was somehow dropped into the issue without any typographic distinction between the interviewer and the interviewee, though I could easily believe that the interview actually consisted of Linda Mollison asking questions of herself.

I ought to address the content of this issue, though that would be hard, since I tried to avoid reading any of the drivel that the staff of the Climax constantly try to peddle as "news". Experience suggests, however, that it was probably all overeager, pushing an obvious agenda, and poorly proofread. (Again with the layout: what the hell was this "-tree—" crap everywhere? Could you not find the search/replace function in InDesign?) I don't think anyone reads the Omen, but I know that nobody reads the Climax, at least not more than once, because it doesn't take more than one read to figure out that it will inevitably be pretty worthless.

This is not to say that I wouldn't appreciate a well-run, well-designed, well-written Hampshire newspaper. A free press is crucial to a functioning democracy, and all that crap. I would love to actually learn things I didn't already know from the Climax. I just don't know how feasible it is to have a news source that functions like that at a small school with no real journalism program. Information travels quickly, and sometimes even accurately, by word of mouth at Hampshire; maybe the Climax really just lacks a niche. It certainly has not, in the three years and counting that I have been attending this college, been any fucking good.



S U B M I T
PRETTY MUCH ANYTHING
T O T H E
O M E N
IT WILL BE PUBLISHED
(AS LONG AS IT'S NOT LIBELOUS OR ANONYMOUS)

OMEN@HAMPSHIRE.EDU

THE OMEN LOVES YOU.

SECTION SPEAK

Time to cash in some civil rights

by Nathan Whitmore

100 billion dollars per year

100 billion dollars per year

100 billion dollars per year

I'm going to keep repeating this statistic until you lose any inclination to question whether I pulled it out of thin air. Because this is the amount of money lost from the US GDP due to piracy

100 billion dollars per year

That staggering statistic is why there's now a bill in the Senate called the Combating Online Infringement and Counterfeits Act. It's fairly simple: the bill would give the Department of Justice the ability to effectively block any website that was involved in piracy. Piracy websites go down, industry revenue goes up. Simple.

But when I told someone about this, she immediately responded *"But what about freedom of the press?"* and that is exactly the point I would like to make.

You see, civil liberties have value. But they're kind of like home equity—it's a mysterious kind of value that you can't really use. You can't use your home equity to go buy a pizza, and your well-regulated militia doesn't actually confer any economic benefits to anyone except the guy who writes "You might be a redneck if..."

That's why the COICA is a great model—it trades in the nebulous, almost-useless value of "freedom of the press" into actual benefit to the American economy. It's a

great model, and I think we need to "cash in" a few of our other civil liberties.

Take freedom of religion, for example. You know what you're not doing when you're "praying" and "worshiping"? *Buying things*. Think about how much better off we'd be, if the only religion allowed based your chances of getting into heaven on how many made-in-the USA automated tomato slicers you possessed?

And while piracy is a big threat to the entertainment industry, you know what's a bigger threat? Freedom of speech. Think of all the money that could be gained, if only you weren't allowed to tell anyone that the new *Transformers* movie is going to suck because it doesn't have Megan Fox, or complain that all Nickelback songs sound the same. What if it was illegal to tell anyone that Ke\$ha has no actual skin, merely a layer of sparkles covering her internal organs, or that Snape kills Dumbledore? Profits. That's what would happen.

As for the legal system, how about getting rid of the prohibition on excessive bail? Bail is money. We need more money. Who better to take it from than those who have committed crimes? If you cost the country 100 billion dollars, you should have to pay them back 100 billion dollars. Period.

Obviously, some of these are going to require changes in our daily lives. But in 5 years, when all the movie reviewers are in jail awaiting payment of \$500,000 of bail, we'll all be enjoying a better life in the land of the free.



*miscellaneous doodles

→ by someone who can't really draw

→ AKA
→ rachel itthen



wearing nothing but her tattered dress
she was trembling for his body
she whispered desperate longing

suddenly and forcefully he kissed her eager breast
revealing her glistening body
she moaned with pleasure

rolling and rocking
ready and willing

she offered her heaving bosom
she touched his strong arms
she teased his manhood

she kissed his hungry loins
he cried out

lost in bliss

overwhelmed with passion

he entered her uncharted continent
filling her secret cavern

their eager lust savagely pulsating
she shuddered under him

he could feel her chamber throbbing

he rode her body with bursting passion
her eyes overwhelmed him

he was aching with burning desire
delight ripped through him

they shuddered

lol mod 70

submitted by Amanda “Ava” Luther
bad photography/photo editing/title by Ian McEwen



Stephen has a stretchy dinosaur

by Evan Silberman



**OMEN
LAYOUT
ALTERNATE THURSDAYS**

**8:00 PM
MERRILL BASEMENT**

HAMPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/OMEN

THE OMEN LOVES YOU.

(conspicuous disclaimer of intentional blank space)

**Google results for
arbitrary phrases (in
other words, a boring
title that describes
exactly what I did with no
creativity whatsoever)**
by Rachel Ithen

“you can’t say happiness without saying penis” –
18,100

“the omen loves you” – 59

“my name is potato” – 52,800

“she put her dog in the microwave” – 3,330

“campus full of hipsters” – 2

“the rain in spain falls mainly on your face” – 1

“we got married in a circus tent” – 1

“i swear i didn’t do it” – 426,000

“i promise i didn’t do it” – 43,000

“the unicorns began to run” – 1

“my dog hides in the bathtub” – 53

“beer pong saved my life” – 7,550



SECTION

Well-written article by Rachel Ithen

This is a well-written article. It is about something fascinating that everyone in the Hampshire community will adore reading about. It will use various trustworthy sources to reiterate statistical information that will aid in getting our point across. It will be more than a paragraph long, and it will leave its audience feeling fulfilled yet still curious. It will be placed in section "lies," not because it includes false information, but because the page would otherwise be completely empty.¹

¹ Except for that submission from Josh Gannon-Solomon that I just added --ed. (*Ian McEwen*)



Dearest Comestibles,

According to the health food authorities, we should not see each other. My love for you is absolutely forbidden in this age of tofu and glutenphobia. But the forbidden nature of my lust for you only makes my desire the stronger. You are all about meat, salt, fat, entrails, mold, the bits of animals that Wal-Mart shoppers will never understand and Whole Foods purists alike may dabble in on weekends, to impress friends and lovers. But I am an out-and-out addict. There is little indeed I wouldn't do for a good paté, salumi, or chorizo. Headcheese intoxicates me. Guanciale, you are like bacon's rich, reclusive brother, a pork jowl cured in salt, and the best friend pasta carbonara ever had. I dream of jerky of all types, America's indigenous answer to Europe's dry sausage, from beef to bison to duck. When I want to take a walk on the kosher side, there is always whitefish, perfectly smoked, peering up out of the case at Westville Market, the pastrami salmon next to it a glorious excess of fish oil and spices. Even pepperoni, the Michael of the proverbial charcuterie Jackson family, holds my attention, and gives me cravings of an unholy potency. A well-made terrine gives me shivers that no steak or hamburger could match, and duck confit puts any Thanksgiving turkey or Christmas ham to shame. Charcuterie, you are without a doubt today's forbidden fruit, the kinkiest kitchen habit short of spatula spankings. One day, I will find a great butcher who understands you the way you deserve, and will allow us to be together again the way we were meant to be. If, in the intervening time, I eat a frankfurter or two or even a Jimmy Dean sausage, please know that none of them could hold a candle to your taste, your history, and your dear place in my heart.

I can't wait to eat you again, baby.

Hungrily yours,

Joshua Gannon-Solomon



Charcuterie: A Love Letter

SUBMIT TO THE
OMEN:

ANYTHING*

omen@hampshire.edu

* Name must be attached. Can't be illegal. Otherwise truly anything.